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But the damning faults of affectation, and of eccentricity just for eccentricity's sake, which are characteristic of the major portion of current "free verse," are never found in the poems of Amy Lowell.

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THE SALVAGING OF CIVILIZATION. By H. G. Wells. New York: the Macmillan Company.

A kind of intellectual knight-errantry upon the part of Mr. Wells—a willingness to attack the most monstrous and savage problems with the weapons of idealism—is no small part of this writer's undeniable appeal. It requires some boldness, one must remember, to advance constructive ideas. Only a venturesome, as well as a disinterested thinker could have written a book like *The Salvaging of Civilization*, and the adventure itself, considering the courage, the high motives, and the intellectual address displayed in it, wins applause. It must be said, however, that Mr. Wells, like Sir Launcelot, does not quite arrive.

Civilization, thinks Mr. Wells, is liable shortly to collapse and the human race to decay unless some way can be found to prevent wars—for into further wars the world is aimlessly drifting; the next great convulsion will be more horrible than the one just passed, and civilization will be unable to withstand the strain. To avert this disaster, the author offers three suggestions—two of which are original.

With that perspicacity which he never fails to manifest in some part of every book that he writes Mr. Wells perceives that the present League of Nations—and, indeed, the league of nations *idea*—is amateurish and insufficient. In words that could not be bettered he points out that the League is "at once, a little too much for American participation and not sufficient for the urgent needs of Europe." What is needed is not something less than the League, but something far greater—a true World State. The proposition is a big one, for the abolition of war means no mere readjustment of human relations, but a change of human nature—war is as much an integral and shaping influence in our present civilization as is religion or law. We ought not, therefore, to underrate the magnitude of the undertaking, but we should realize that because of this very magnitude a heroic remedy is required.

It at once occurs to the reader, at this point, that there is possibly something a little wrong with Mr. Wells's logic. To say that because a World State is incompatible with national jealousy, with that atrocious Sinn-Fein spirit which the author identifies with European patriotism, that therefore the remedy for war is to establish a World State as soon as possible, would be like arguing that because football-playing is incompatible with physical debility therefore tubercular patients should play football. Practically Mr. Wells recognizes this; but the recognition takes away more perhaps than he realizes from the force of his plea for a World State. The whole problem, he admits, is one of intellectual and moral education.

How does Mr. Wells propose to provide the education necessary for the salvaging of civilization? His first suggestion on this score is original and fascinating—if somewhat startling. He suggests the preparation of a book of wisdom for universal distribution, to be called “the Bible of Civilization.” The old Bible, he argues, is open to criticism in several important respects. For one thing, it is tautological; it tells, for instance, the history of the Jewish nation twice over. And again, it is unscientific. But its most serious fault is that it has become standardized, that it has ceased to grow—a condition that did not exist in those early ages in which the Bible had its origin. The idea of the old Bible was, however, essentially right. It was a needed compilation of all the knowledge and inspiration available in its age, and, best of all, it did give man a real conception of his place in the universe. Following so successful a model, Mr. Wells would construct his modern Bible closely upon the lines of the old. There would be a biological and geological section corresponding to the Book of Genesis; hygiene and ethics would fill the place of Deuteronomy; there would be literary Books; and finally there would be a “Book of Forecasts.” Mr. Wells does not say whether he would include in his Book of Proverbs such sayings as Thomas Brackett Reed’s definition of a statesman, or Labouchere’s comment that “mere disbelief in the existence of God does not entitle a man’s opinions on all other topics to uncritical acceptance.” The Book of Forecasts would consist of the programmes and philosophies of living statesmen, and the author ironically suggests that while the first draught would undoubtedly be a pale and sad affair, the project would at least force public men to define their ultimate aims and to question themselves as to whether they had any ultimate aims.

What Mr. Wells presents in his conception of a modern Bible is, in short, just a brief abstract of all our education and culture—including the sort of thing we read in the magazines and reviews. Well, probably Mr. Bryan would contribute, and if he isn’t a prophet, who is? It is a grave question whether our modern education and culture, with its vast extent, its rival views, and its considerable uncertainty, could advantageously be thus compacted. Besides, how many, who do not go to college, could really understand Mr. Wells’s Bible? Not even the amount of advertizing done by the promoters of the Encyclopaedia Britannica would be sufficient to popularize such a work, and this amount does not equal the total propaganda in behalf of education in our colleges. Illiterate persons would not assemble in churches and Grange halls to hear Mr. Wells’s Bible read to them. People do not do that sort of thing nowadays. They go to Chautauquas to hear Mr. Bryan direct. In brief, isn’t it better to let our vast and somewhat fluid culture do its work in the ways it has found for itself—in schools and libraries, in books and periodicals—than to attempt to concentrate it in a Bible? It is by its very nature a diffused and general influence.

Moreover, in all this, Mr. Wells seems completely to ignore the fact that the immense influence of the Bible has been due in large part to general belief in

its inspiration. It may be true that the world has passed the point when it can be saved, or greatly aided, by belief in an inspired book; but it does not follow from this that it can be saved by the popularization of an uninspired book. Something more than factitious enthusiasm for the five-foot shelf is evidently needed.

The author's third suggestion seems more practical than the others. Mr. Wells is one of the few who have grasped the essential truth that the great difficulty in education is just the difficulty of securing an adequate supply of competent teachers. He therefore urges that the work of planning lessons and supplying materials be centralized; that every teacher be supplied with the best possible lecture notes, apparatus, diagrams, phonograph records, and cinema films from a central bureau. The premise is certainly sound, and better organization in these matters might secure greater efficiency. But Mr. Wells's criticism seems to point to deficiencies possibly more prevalent in England than in America, and also it is clear that, in the form of text-books, laboratory methods, and uniform supplies, we already have a considerable degree of standardization. Experience seems to show, moreover, that good teachers, and writers of excellent text-books, are apt to become affected with a kind of bureaucratic stupidity as soon as they are constrained to cooperate in making out a syllabus. Something is to be said, after all, for educational liberty.

On the whole, one finds in Mr. Wells's extraordinary and stimulating, not to say provoking book, little more than several ordinary ideas greatly magnified.

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IS AMERICA SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY? By William McDougal, Professor of Psychology in Harvard College. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

While Mr. Wells pessimistically analyzes the causes of the probable downfall of European civilization, and with unquenchable optimism suggests educational remedies, Professor McDougal writes in a somewhat sprightly manner of how "the American nation is speeding gaily down the road to destruction," and not too hopefully points to Eugenics as the sole available remedy. It is worth noting that Eugenics is the one thing that Mr. Wells considers too vague and impractical to be worth discussing as a means of national and world salvation, whereas Professor McDougal emphasizes the limited effect of education upon the race. If one had to choose between the two, one would unhesitatingly decide in favor of Professor McDougal. It ought to be clear enough by this time that the limits of education, and hence of reform, are fixed by native intelligence, and Eugenics appears both a more logical and a more sufficient alternative to sheer destruction than does a centralized educational bureau. But when doctors disagree there is always the hope that both may be wrong, and the thesis that this or that is the *only possible* remedy for a threatening evil has been frequently falsified by history.

Hence we hope that, despite Mr. Balfour's thesis that conclusions are gener-